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Bork's Nomination to Supreme Court is Rejected

After one of the most bitter battles ever waged over a Supreme Court nominee, the Senate, Oct. 23, rejected the nomination of Judge Robert H. Bork. The vote was 58 against confirmation and 42 in favor, the biggest margin by which the Senate has ever rejected a Supreme Court nomination. Judge Bork was the 27th Supreme Court nominee to be rejected in U.S. history, and the first since, 1970, when Pres. Nixon's nomination of G. Harrold Carswell was rejected. Pres. Reagan responded to the resounding defeat of his nominee by saying: "I am saddened and disappointed that the Senate has bowed today to a campaign of political pressure." He added that his next nominee for the court "will share Judge Bork's belief in judicial restraint—that a judge is bound by the Constitution to interpret laws, not make them." Senate Judiciary Chairman Joseph Biden Jr. (D-Del.) said there was "no possibility" a new nominee could be investigated and confirmed by Thanksgiving, when Congress tentatively was scheduled to adjourn for the year.

Reagan/Gorbachev Summit Plans Stalled

Top-level negotiations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union unexpectedly broke off, Oct. 23, after Mikhail Gorbachev refused to set a date for a summit meeting with Pres. Reagan. The Soviet leader insisted that differences over the development of space-based defense weapons must be resolved first. The apparent deadlock over Pres. Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative ("Star Wars") seemed to be similar to that which ended the last meeting between the leaders one year ago in Reykjavik, Iceland. Gorbachev told Sec. of State George Shultz that while most of the remaining obstacles to a treaty abolishing medium and shorter-range nuclear missiles had been resolved, and that progress had been made toward reducing longer-range weapons, it was not enough to justify the promised meeting tentatively scheduled for late 1987.